

Consolidated comments and discussion on the research track process

(reverse chronological order)

SEDAR STEERING COMMITTEE – May 2017

The Committee reviewed progress on addressing the details of the research track process and developing specific project guidance such as schedules and TORs. As of this meeting a detailed process that mapped out differences and similarities between the research track and benchmark process was not completed. Therefore, the review by cooperators and development of specific SOPPS modifications was not completed.

- The Committee agreed that the proposed research track process was not ready to be implemented at this time. Important process and descriptive information and documentation needs to be provided.
- Chairman Ponwith committed to facilitating discussions with SEFSC staff to reach consensus on critical details of the research track, and document the process through example TORs and schedules. Once that effort is complete, the process details and recommendations will be provided to the SOPPs review group described at the September 2016 meeting, and then to the Steering Committee in September 2017 for review and recommendations.
 - Some Cooperators have yet to identify their SOPPS group representatives. A follow-up request for appointments will be sent once the process documents are completed by SEFSC.
- The Committee agreed that maintaining a strong SSC role throughout assessment development is critical.
- The Committee raised concerns that the productivity benefits offered by the research track, primarily related to increased operational assessments, may not be achievable given the current data delivery capabilities of the SEFSC. Research track process development needs to consider realistic data delivery capabilities, and the effects of process changes on key data providers throughout the region.
- The Committee recommended conducting the Atlantic Cobia assessment as a SEDAR benchmark, including stock ID evaluation based on the process developed in September 2016.

SAFMC SSC – April 2017

The SAFMC SSC reviewed overview documents on the research track process that were provided to the Steering Committee in May and provided extensive comments, summarized below.

- Many aspects of the Research Track are unclear... critical to clearly specify process and role of the SSC ... need clear timeline...retain data-assessment-review steps.

- Does Research Track will replace a Benchmark? Noted the NEFSC intent when derived was the RT complimented benchmarks. Used very sparingly – first time assessments, innovative methods, challenges, new datasets.

SAFMC SSC – October 2016

The SSC reviewed the September 2016 Steering Committee Report:

The SSC expressed concerns with piloting the Research Track on 2 different species concurrently. Lessons learned from the first research track cannot be used to improve upon the concurrent second assessment, which can lead to mistakes being repeated to the detriment of that assessment.

SEDAR STEERING COMMITTEE – September 2016

The Committee considered the research track assessment process and potential changes in the SEDAR SOPPS. The group recommended moving ahead with the research track approach for scamp as well as other future benchmarks assessments, primarily based on the suggested increases in productivity.

- Approved the research track pilot for scamp, recommended conducting cobia as a research track.
- Operational assessments merge existing update-standard, mirror standard by retaining SSC role in TORs and OA approach
- Project start up planning (tors, appointments, schedule process) remains same as existing benchmark, with open RW scheduling. DW and AW in person workshops held
- Research track does not :
 - provide management advice
 - include the most up to date data
- Research track provides
 - data evaluation & decisions
 - assessment model tool developed, evaluated
 - sensitivities and uncertainties evaluated
 - Projection approaches developed and evaluated
 - candidate reference points evaluated and discussed with regard to uncertainty and risk
 - population parameter estimates
 - Recommendations for further research and data needs. short and long term
 - Recommendations for operational assessment framework and timing
 - i.e., everything now in benchmark report except status determination
- RW will need approximate scheduling for CIE planning
- Timing of operational assessments after research track?
 - Approximately 1 year after SSC review of the research track, typical
 - May be adjusted based on what needs to be addressed, data availability, research needs, management timelines
- Direct SEDAR staff to begin drafting SOPPS changes while Research Track pilots are underway.
 - Participants for SOPPS team

- SEFSC: 1 each from the Miami, Beaufort and Panama City assessment teams, Clay Porch, Steve Turner
 - 1 from each Cooperator SSC (at least GMFMC, SAFMC, CFMC, HMS. Other cooperators are also welcome to participate)
 - SEDAR staff will chair
 - Other representation: Cooperator staff, SERO
 - Appointments by: November 1, 2016
 - Draft SOPPS review by steer committee: Fall 2017
- Consider applying aspects of the research track to the GOM gray snapper assessment now underway – flexible RW scheduling and operational assessment
 - Agreed to consider it. Direct staff to hold a webinar ASAP with principals to discuss feasibility.
 - Issues to discuss include, not limited:
 - Do participants want to consider research track for this assessment?
 - How to determine RW scheduling
 - How to fold existing progress into research track

GMFMC SSC – June 2016

The Gulf SSC received a presentation from the SEFSC on the RT process. The Committee supported the approach in concept, but raised questions about the details, such as the role of the SSC and stakeholders, and the need for details SOPPs.

GMFMC SSC – January 2016

The Gulf initially discussed the concept in January 2016, but noted there was insufficient information to evaluate the idea. Concern was raised with the timing of deliverables.